

Osberstown offers work-life balance

This village and business district will combine to offer an alternative to commuting

Local authorities have identified Osberstown as key to the delivery of significant economic benefit to the Kildare region, providing employment for 6,000 and accommodation for 3,000 people in its early phases.

Osberstown's development is part of a strategic move in the county away from dependence on Dublin, particularly for employment. Naas has been designated as a primary growth area under the National Spatial Strategy, and there is ongoing commitment to promoting self-sustaining growth in the area.

Spread over 400 acres, Osberstown is one of the first modern sustainable urban extensions being built outside the capital, according to Tony Jones, business development director at Osberstown Developments.

"Employees and residents alike can benefit from an all-encompassing vibrant modern village and business district," said Jones. "It is not only part of but will also contribute to the Naas north-west quadrant development plan, which is Kildare's response to the government strategies of Transport 21, the national spatial strategy, Naas town development plan and the Naas integrated framework plan."

The new urban hub is fostering a community atmosphere that will complement Naas town and the Kildare region. "Osberstown offers businesses the rare and much sought after opportunity to expand and develop while fully achieving quality of life for all employees, by combining a highly attractive working environment with quality residential, shopping, leisure and health amenities."

Osberstown comprises five distinct, though integrated, elements: a business park, an enterprise park, an urban centre, a residential quarter and a health services cluster.

Millennium business park incorporates 62 hectares for office and commercial use, and accommodates both Irish and international business from a variety of sectors.

Offices are being built in phased developments. Currently, around



Millennium Park: incorporates 62 hectares for office and commercial use, and currently employs 700 people

700 people are employed in Millennium Park and this figure is likely to rise to 1,000 by the end of July. By the end of 2009, it is estimated that there will be 2,000 employees working across Osberstown.

The Gateway comprises tailored light industrial accommodation. These enterprise units provide modern high spec premises for developing companies that wish to expand or move to larger premises.

Coupled with the business and enterprise parks, Jones said there would also be an urban centre, designed to serve the needs of the Osberstown community, complementing but not competing with the established town centre of Naas.

"This centre will serve the local population while also supporting employees based within the park with essential day-to-day facilities such as shops, hotels, restaurants, schools and child care facilities. Al-

ready, Millennium Park is serviced with a creche for employees."

The centre will also be the key direct link between Sallins and Naas town centre, with a public transport corridor linking the two, and providing access to the public transport network through Osberstown.

"The residential element, Osberstown Village, will epitomise modern living, and combined with the urban centre, will deliver an energetic and animated village quarter to the project," said Jones. To complete the all-encompassing nature of the project, the Source will offer essential facilities for the community's health such as leisure facilities, GPs, dentists and physiotherapists, alongside a privately developed hospital."

Development of a private 70-bed-room hospital in the Source [health and leisure] section of Osberstown will complement the already existing medical cluster of doctors, physiotherapists and dentists.

Osberstown's development is part of a strategic move in the county away from dependence on Dublin

Osberstown is about designing and developing something different," said Jones. "Phased innovative building progression ensures that facilities and social amenities will be built in conjunction with office and retail space.

"Indeed, by learning from the mistakes of other Irish developments and taking the positives from European comparisons, Osberstown will be a destination where work, leisure and living are all concentrated together highlighting a model of sustainable urban design."

Of equal importance is the emphasis placed on landscape considerations and open space allocation, where employees and residents can relax and enjoy leisure time.

Osberstown offers the full breadth of communication services, with a wide choice of service providers and high capacity fibre networks supplied. Building design and configurations are carefully



Osberstown: 'Ireland's great intersection'

varied to offer choice and flexibility – so that layouts can be adapted to meet individual tenants' needs.

"Sustainability is an integral part of the design code at Osberstown," said Jones. "Measures that promote energy conservation and efficiency are being adopted for all buildings. The use of sustainable heating systems, such as combined heat and power and geothermal heat pumps, are actively promoted."

One of the major goals of the Osberstown vision is to narrow the gap between work and home life. "Employers now have to take account of the way in which people want to work and live, and the negative effects our commuting lifestyle has on companies – both financially and in terms of staff retention," said Jones.

"Existing companies within Osberstown are testament to the unique benefits the development has to offer, with staff experiencing easy commutes, a pleasant working environment and an overall superior quality of life. Businesses can tap into a large pool of highly skilled workers who would be more than happy to give up the daily commute to the city and work nearer their homes."

Osberstown is working with Kildare County Council on the creation of a skills register, to highlight the workforce resource Kildare has to offer prospective companies.

Located on outskirts of Naas, Co Kildare, Osberstown is 30 minutes drive from Dublin City centre, 15 minutes from M50, and 40 minutes from Dublin Airport; Naas is 3 minutes away and Sallins railway station, 2 minutes away.

Located at what is now known as "Ireland's great intersection", Osberstown affords easy access and proximity to the airport/M50/M1 and to the M9/M7/M4/M6 national traffic arteries.

Osberstown Developments is also working closely with Kildare

County Council and Naas Town Council to provide the delivery of planned interchange access between Osberstown, Naas and the M7 motorway.

The adopted Naas masterplan incorporates plans for the provision of a public transport corridor, which will run from Sallins train station through Osberstown centre and into Naas town centre. The route will be serviced by bus initially but will be immediately upgradeable to road train or light rail as the development of the north-west quadrant progresses.

Osberstown has received an extremely positive response from industry, due to the combination of high quality designed buildings and the stimulating "life focus" environment. At present, there is a large mixture of companies located within the park, such as IFS/State Street, HSE, GEA, Horse Sport Ireland, Rentokil and Irish Commercial, plus own-door businesses including solicitors, accountancy firms, medical practices and financial advisors.

Of the phase one Gateway enterprise units, 75 per cent have already been sold off the plans. Construction will be completed by September 2008. Construction of the Osberstown centre will commence early next year.

Office space is available to purchase or lease, starting at €18 to €20 per square foot depending on requirements. Enterprise Units are available for purchase/lease, and are starting from €12 per square foot.

Purchased for €315 million in 2006 by Gerry Prendergast, Paddy Sweeney and Tom Considine (the directors of Osberstown Developments), the 408-acre site is being developed as an integrated community project over the next seven to ten years. €75 million has already been invested in Osberstown's infrastructure.